

Dear Members of the State Building Code Council,

I'm writing to urge you to approve the proposed updates to the Washington State commercial energy code to require that new commercial buildings be built with clean electric heat pumps and heat pump water heaters instead of dangerous and polluting gas appliances.

After years of back to back climate chaos, from devastating floods to historic wildfires to unprecedented heat waves, it is clear that decision-makers at all levels of government must act to reduce emissions, and create a just transition off of fossil fuels. Buildings are also a significant cause of pollution-related deaths due to their contributions to air pollution.

A recent Harvard study showed that in Washington, burning fossil fuels in commercial buildings was responsible for over \$110 million in health impacts from outdoor air pollution in 2017 alone. Another study found that children in homes with gas stoves have a 42% higher risk of developing asthmatic symptoms. We know that Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) and low-income communities are disproportionately impacted by air pollution and the resulting health effects, so continuing to allow new buildings to burn fossil fuels is not only a climate justice issue, but one of racial and economic justice as well.

The proposed code updates ensure that, as we continue to construct large new buildings, we are doing so in a manner that is equitable and sustainable and in line with the climate commitments made by the Governor and our Legislature. Washington is a climate leader -- these code changes are a clear way to act on our commitments and transition away from fossil fuel use in new buildings, increase energy efficiency, and bring more rooftop solar online.

These proposals have been vetted over the last year by building and design industry professionals. I ask that you please move forward with the full package of amendments, including the heat pump space heating and water heating amendments. Thank you for your consideration and your work on behalf of the state.

Together with the constituency letters, (Health, Builders/Architects, Affordable housing, Air Quality and Equity, Local elected leaders) that have been submitted/will be submitted by today at 5 pm, we have a total of **over 5,000 comments**. Below is the total of signers that shows the 5,000+. Note that the constituency letters are coming under separate cover from a respective leader in their constituency e.g. the health care letter was sent in earlier today with 140 signers from the director of WA Physicians for Social Responsibility, Max Savishinsky.

Citizens Climate Lobby	11
Climate Solutions	837
Columbia Riverkeeper	296
Earth Ministry	292

Earthjustice	759
Environment WA	372
RE Sources	285
Sierra Club	1,456
Thurston Climate Action Team and Faith Action Climate Team	20
Washington Environmental Council	437
	4,765
WA Physicians for Social Responsibility	140
Architects and builders sign on letter	50
Elected sign on letter	81
Affordable housing sign on letter	11
Air quality community equity sign on letter	11
	5,058

Thank you very much,

Joelle

Joëlle Robinson | Field Director

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